

PATENT  
BRENDA 5

Applicant requests that the Patent Office amend the application transmittal letter and Filing Receipt to omit the priority claims. A copy of the Filing Receipt is attached, with requested changes indicated in red ink.

No fee is seen to be due for this Preliminary Amendment.

The Patent Office is invited to contact the undersigned to discuss any issues relating to this application.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 20, 2001

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*changes made by this Amendment*

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1                   **AUTOMATED ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

2                   ~~This is a continuation-in-part application of co-pending application serial no. 09/501,197,~~  
3                   ~~filed February 10, 2000, having a common inventor herewith.~~

4                   **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

5                   The present invention relates to dispute resolution, and more particularly, is directed to  
6                   using a communication network to assist parties in resolving an electronic commerce dispute and  
7                   automatically leaving comments to promote participation in and compliance with the automated  
8                   dispute resolution.

9                   When parties to a transaction are no longer in agreement relating to the transaction, they  
10                  are having a dispute. Conventional methods for dispute resolution are laborious, often involving  
11                  not only a tangible result, such as a transfer of funds, but also involving an emotional result, such  
12                  as face-saving. Additionally, even after the parties resolve their conflict, one or more may fail to  
13                  perform as agreed, creating an enforcement problem.

14                 Electronic commerce (e-commerce) generally refers to buying and selling of goods  
15                 and/or services using a communication network such as the Internet. Additional issues presented  
16                 by a dispute relating to an e-commerce transaction include jurisdictional and venue questions,  
17                 choice of law, and lack of relationship motivation. Relationship motivation refers to the well  
18                 known guideline that parties who expect to have to deal with each other after a dispute is  
19                 resolved tend to be more flexible and reasonable during the dispute resolution process, whereas  
20                 parties that can avoid each other after the dispute resolution tend to present more polarized  
21                 positions during the dispute resolution process.

22                 When an e-commerce transaction involves a consumer purchasing from a merchant, there  
23                 are additional considerations: the monetary value of the transaction is often quite small, and the

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